

M I C H I G A N Agriculture News



STATE SENATOR 21st District

Ron Jelinek

ADDRESS: P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

PHONE: (517) 373.6960

TOLL-FREE: (866) 305.2121

E-MAIL: senrjelinek@senate.michigan.gov

WEBSITE: www.SenatorRonJelinek.com

**FREE FISHING
WEEKEND**
JUNE 9TH & 10TH

<http://michigan.gov/dnr>

(Click fishing on the left sidebar)

2002 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

21st District Profile

Number of farms:

3,061

Land in Farms:

539,396 acres

Market Value of Production:

\$257,712,000

Dear Friend of Agriculture:

Agriculture is also an important part of the quality of life in the 21st Senate District, and I will continue to work hard on behalf of the agricultural community. If there is any way I may be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me toll-free at 866-305-2121 or by e-mail at senrjelinek@senate.michigan.gov.

Best wishes for a productive and prosperous season!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Ron Jelinek in black ink.

Ron Jelinek
State Senator
21st District

Value-Added Agriculture Receives a Boost

The agriculture industry will have greater access to money in the 21st Century Jobs Fund under Senate legislation signed into law. The new laws help promote value-added opportunities.

A new requirement calls for the Department of Agriculture to hold a commercialization roundtable to promote agricultural innovation and ways to infuse capital into value-added ventures. Another measure expands the Agriculture Development Fund to a grant and loan program instead of grant only to help more businesses launch new products or expand.

Examples of value-added agriculture include agri-tourism, direct farm marketing, food processing, or producing specialty products. Michigan produces over 125 raw commodities, second in diversity only to California. Michigan's diversity increases tenfold by taking those raw commodities and adding value to them through further processing and marketing.

SENATOR JELINEK SUPPORTS RENEWABLE FUELS PACKAGE

Our agricultural economy will get a lift from new laws designed to increase the use of alternative energy in Michigan. Senate Republicans spearheaded the effort to encourage the development and use of renewable fuels like ethanol and biodiesel. The measures establish a wide range of tax incentives along with a provision to create new renaissance zones for the manufacture of alternative energy.

Ethanol is a clean-burning, high-octane fuel primarily produced from corn. Biodiesel is a cleaner burning diesel fuel made from natural products like soybean oil. Corn and soybeans are among Michigan's top

commodities. Approximately 1.9 million acres of corn is harvested annually in Michigan.

Three ethanol plants are currently up and running in Albion, Lake Odessa and Caro; plants in Marysville and Riga Township are under construction. Other plants are also under discussion.

I wholeheartedly supported the plan to encourage development of renewable fuels in Michigan. As the center of automotive technology and a leader in agricultural research, I believe Michigan is well positioned to take the lead and capitalize on renewable energy fuels and technologies.

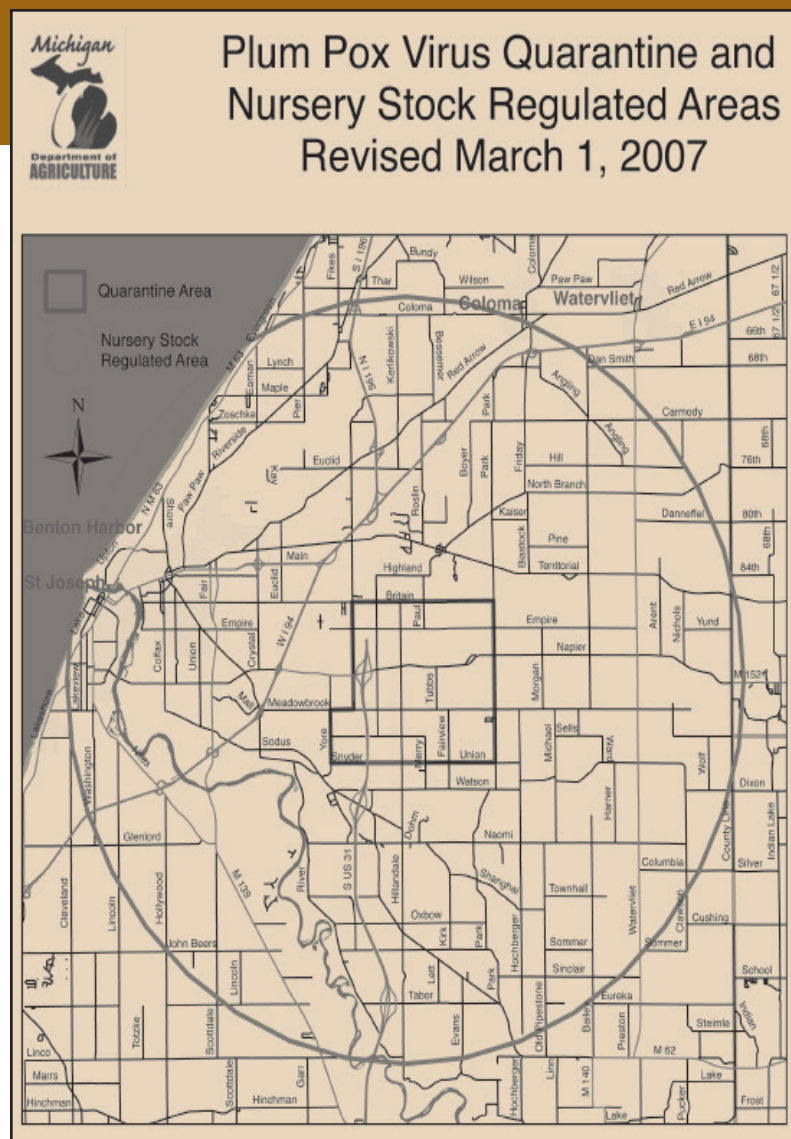
PLUM POX VIRUS QUARANTINE

The Michigan Department of Agriculture has announced the establishment of a state quarantine to prevent the spread of Plum Pox Virus (PPV) - a disease which affects stone fruit, such as plums and peaches. The MDA detected the virus in a single plum tree east of Benton Harbor in the fall of 2006, resulting in portions of Berrien County being placed under federal restriction. The state's quarantine restricts movement of susceptible trees and plant parts near the location where the PPV was discovered, but does not affect movement of fruit from the area.

PPV is a viral disease of stone fruit, such as peaches, nectarines, apricots, and plums and closely related ornamentals. The D-strain identified in Berrien County is not known to affect cherry trees. PPV can only be transmitted by aphids or by grafting where infected cuttings or rootstock is used. This disease poses no human or animal health threat.

For success in stopping this disease, the Department urges citizens to abide by the state's quarantine and not transport susceptible stone fruit species. Individuals or businesses found violating the state's PPV quarantine could be subject to fines ranging from \$1,000 to \$250,000 and jail time of up to five years for moving regulated materials.

For more information about this quarantine, visit the MDA at www.michigan.gov/mda or through your regional MDA office or your local MSU Extension office (information and map provided by the MDA).



SENATE ENCOURAGES AG FACILITY EXPANSION

Agriculture is the state's second leading industry and one of the lifelines for Michigan's economic vitality. Senate legislation I supported to help our agricultural industry grow and create jobs has now been signed into law. Public Act 284 of 2006 creates ten new agriculture processing renaissance zones in Michigan. Facilities in these areas are exempt from all state and local taxes for up to 15 years.

Under the new law, the state must look at these considerations when awarding an agriculture processing renaissance zone:

- Economic impact on local suppliers
- Creation of jobs
- Viability of the project
- Economic impact on the community

In addition, at least half of the new renaissance zones must be located in rural areas.

This new law will open the door for more agriculture facilities to expand their processing operations and help farmers stay competitive. Find out more information on renaissance zones at www.michigan.org/medc/services/sitedevelopment/renzone/.

SENATOR JELINEK SUPPORTS ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS

New Law Promotes Efficiency and Environmental Stewardship

A Senate bill signed into law provides assistance to farmers and food processors to help make operations cleaner and more efficient, and generate renewable energy. Under Public Act 254 of 2006, eligible farmers can obtain loans of up to \$200,000 to build agricultural energy production systems, which often have high start-up costs and can run as much as \$2 million.

Methane digesters, one of the most common types of the systems, process animal waste using treatment technology that yields methane gas, and at the same time reduces the volume of solids and liquids. Harmful pathogens are neutralized and odors are eliminated. Other systems covered by the new law include biomass gasification and thermal depolymerization.

The energy produced can be used to generate electricity for the farm operation.

Senate Republicans worked tirelessly with industry groups to bring this legislation to fruition. You can find information on the loan program at www.michigan.gov/deg. Click on "Pollution Prevention" on the left sidebar to access the Small Business Pollution Prevention Loan Program.

State Bans Importation of Wisconsin Hogs

Effective immediately, the Michigan Department of Agriculture is banning the importation of Wisconsin hogs due to an outbreak of Pseudorabies Virus (PRV) in that state. Testing in mid-April conducted by the National Veterinary Services Laboratories confirmed PRV in a swine herd in Clark County, Wisconsin.

MDA Director Irwin said the state is taking swift, aggressive action to safeguard the health and economic viability of Michigan's pork industry. Michigan achieved pseudorabies free status in 2000. The ability of this disease to spread to hogs and other animals poses an imminent danger to the swine industry resulting in this ban. Violations are punishable by fines of up to \$50,000 and/or up to five years imprisonment, and violators will not receive any indemnification payments at the discretion of the MDA director.

Pseudorabies is a highly contagious viral disease primarily affecting swine, but other animals such as deer, raccoons, cattle, sheep, goats, dogs and cats can also be infected. It is not a health threat to humans. PRV is transmitted through nasal and oral secretions, food, water and the environment, and can be carried on car tires, boots and clothing. Additionally, swine may harbor the virus without showing clear signs. In 2005, Michigan's pork industry generated \$230 million, produced more than 470 million pounds of pork and had a total swine population of 960,000.

The ban will stay in place until testing of all herds within a five-mile radius of the infected herd are identified and tested negative. Once testing is complete, the MDA will review the results and evaluate Michigan's position.

For more information, please visit the MDA Web site at www.michigan.gov/mda or the United States Department of Agriculture Web site at www.usda.gov.

Agricultural Tourism Report Available

Agricultural tourism is growing as a source of income for many family farms and a way to preserve farmland. The Michigan Agricultural Tourism Advisory Commission recently issued a final report with recommendations to help support and promote this important industry. You can view the report along with a local zoning guidebook online at www.michigan.gov/mda.

Mandatory Cattle ID Program In Effect

Electronic identification ear tags are now mandatory statewide for movement of cattle from farms effective March 1, 2007. Cattle must be tagged if they are leaving the farm to be sold or changing ownership. For more information, or to check for updates on the program, go to www.michigan.gov/mda or www.michigananimalid.com.

— FAIR CALENDAR —

July 16 – 21 Van Buren Youth Fair

55670 CR 681
Hartford 49057
(269) 621-2038

July 30 - Aug. 4 Cass County Fair Association

590 N. O'Keefe
Cassopolis 49031
(269) 445-8265

Aug. 13 - 18 Berrien County Youth Fair Association

9122 Old US-31 Hwy.
Berrien Springs 49103
(269) 473-4251

MICHIGAN EXPORTS

The MDA International and New Market Development Program provides services that help Michigan food and agricultural firms initiate or expand their international and domestic markets. Visit the website at www.michigan.gov/mda to access a wealth of resources, including trade leads and trade show information. Click on Michigan Marketplace on the left sidebar.

Michigan's Top Five Agricultural Exports 2005:

Soybeans and products — **\$222 million**

Feed grains and products — **\$163 million**

Vegetables — **\$152 million**

Dairy products — **\$66 million**

Wheat and products — **\$60 million**

USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service, August 2006

Resources for Agriculture

Michigan Department of Agriculture
www.michigan.gov/mda

U.S. Department of Agriculture
www.usda.gov

Agricultural Statistics Service
www.nass.usda.gov/mi

USDA Rural Development
www.rurdev.usda.gov/mi/
Phone: 800-944-8119

Farm Service Agency
www.fsa.usda.gov

MSU Extension
www.msue.msu.edu

MSU Product Center
(Commercialization Assistance)
www.productcenter.msu.edu
phone: 517-432-8750

MSU Agriculture Weather Office
www.agweather.geo.msu.edu

Emerald Ash Borer
www.michigan.gov/eab
Phone: 866-325-0023

West Nile Virus
www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases
Phone: 888-668-0869

Bovine Tuberculosis
www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases
Phone: 517-373-1077

